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TAGS: AMGT, KFLO, APER
SUBJECT: ANNOUNCING PRE-DEPARTURE SEMINAR FOR EMPLOYEES
AND FAMILY MEMBERS ON UNACCOMPANIED TOURS

1. The Family Liaison Office, in partnership with FSI's Transition Center, announces a new Pre-Departure Seminar to be held at FSI on August 2 & 3, 2007. This seminar is intended for employees and family members who are preparing for or experiencing an Unaccompanied Tour. Direct hire employees of Foreign Affairs agencies with PCS or TDY assignments of 6 months or more to unaccompanied posts and/or their family members (spouses, partners, parents, siblings, or adult children) are invited to participate. The course is designed for both the employee and the family member to attend together; it would also be beneficial for either to attend alone, if necessary. Thanks to generous funding from the Una Chapman Cox Foundation, this highly interactive pilot program is being offered tuition-free for all participants.

2. Background:

Advance preparation is a key element for successfully managing an Unaccompanied Tour (UT). Employees and family members who have completed UTs realized that their level of confidence rose with increased preparation, while lowering their level of anxiety. A sense of competency and control leads to a more positive attitude. Families feel encouraged to remain connected to and supportive of the employees in the field. Meanwhile the employee is better able to concentrate on the job at hand if s/he feels assured that the family is safe and managing successfully back home.

3. Course Content:

The various sessions of this two-day course are designed to provide information on Department Regulations and Allowances, available support services, and the emotional cycle experienced through the stages of preparation, separation and repatriation. Participants will enhance

skills such as financial management, stress management and communication, and will strengthen their ability to cope with the upcoming UT. There will be opportunities for both group and individual discussion sessions on topics ranging from contingency planning to eldercare to education and youth issues to maintaining physical and mental health. The goal is to raise the confidence and comfort levels of the participants with the unaccompanied tour experience.

4. Most participants in this course will be preparing for an UT, while some will be experiencing separation already. A lunch time panel of others who have completed an UT will share with the class their experiences and insights into the repatriation/reunion process.

5. Space is limited to 24 participants so you are encouraged to sign up quickly. For registration and further information, please contact FLO's Unaccompanied Tour Specialist Nan Leininger at LeiningerNW@state.gov or call 202-647-3179 or 1-800-440-0397.

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